

LESSON XVII.

FRUITS OF RIGHT AND WRONG DOING

December 17, 1899

Malachi 3: 13-4: 6. Commit to memory vs. 16-18. Compare Mal. 3: 1-6, also Matt. 11: 7-15

13 Your words have been stout against me, saith the LORD. Yet ye say, What have we spoken so much against thee?

14 Ye have said, It is vain to serve God: and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinance, and that we have walked mournfully before the LORD of hosts?

15 And now we call the proud happy; yea, they that work wickedness are set up; yea, they that tempt God are even delivered.

16 Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name.

17 And they shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.

18 Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth

God and him that serveth him not.

Ch. 4: 1 For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the LORD of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.

2 But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall.

3 And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do it, saith the LORD of hosts.

4 Remember ye the law of Moses my servant, which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments.

5 Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD:

6 And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.

Revised Version.—1 Wherein; 2 Charge; 3 Margin, in mournful apparel; 4 Built up; 5 They tempt God, and are delivered; 6 Spake one with another; 7 Omitt; 8 Day that I do make, even a peculiar treasure; 9 It burneth as a furnace; 10 And all that work wickedness; 11 Gambol as; 12 That I do make; 13 Even statutes; 14 Before the great and terrible day of the Lord come

GOLDEN TEXT

"Whatever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." Gal. 6: 7.

DAILY READINGS

M.—Mal. 3: 13 to 4: 6. Fruits of right and wrong doing.

T.—Psalm 73: 1-20. The mystery explained.

W.—Job 22: 12-27. Folly of rejecting God.

Th.—2 Tim. 2: 19-26. God knows His own.

F.—Eccles. 8: 1-13. Certainty of judgment.

S.—Deut. 4: 5-13. Remember!

S.—Gal. 6: 1-10.—Sowing and reaping.

TIME

Probably 100. 13-14-27, as last lesson.

PLACE

Jerusalem and its vicinity.

CATECHISM

Review questions 79-81.

LESSON HYMNS

Book of Praise—6 (Ps., 136, 591) 146, 148.

LESSON PLAN

I. Rebellion, 13-15.

Deliberate, scornful, determined.

II. Remembrance, 16-18.

On God's part, of those who were faithful.

III. Retribution, Ch. 4: 1

Upon the wicked

IV. Reward, 2, 3

To His own.

V. Reminder, 4-6.

To look backward to Moses and forward to the day of the Lord.

CONNECTING LINKS

To the pious Jews of Malachi's time God's providence seemed to be unjust, since the wicked prospered and were built up; whilst the righteous suffered from want and distress. To His people, in this condition of doubt, God makes answer through His prophet.

EXPOSITION

I. Rebellion, 13-15.

V. 13-15. *Your words have been stout.* "Your words are hard upon me" (Prof. G. Adam Smith), bold, presumptuous, impudent; their words of unbelief and murmuring. (Compare verses 14-16). *Yet ye say, What have we spoken?* They not only speak impudently against God but challenge Him to show that they have done so.

V. 14. *Ye have said, It is vain to serve God;*

the language of unbelief, implying that God dealt unjustly with the faithful, receiving their services but not rewarding them. (Ch. 2: 17; Ps. 73: 13; Job 21: 14, 15.) *That ye have kept his ordinance;* been faithful to observe all His laws. *Walked mournfully;* literally, "In filthy funeral garb," in garments of penitence and in token of fasting, as those who seek to deny themselves for God. (Compare Luke 18: 12.)